

February 11, 2005

Dr. Polly Penhale
National Science Foundation
Office of Polar Programs
4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 755S
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Dr. Penhale:

In accordance with National Environmental Policy Act and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the National Science Foundation's final environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Development and Implementation of Surface Traverse Capabilities in Antarctica. We understand that this document was also prepared as a Comprehensive Environmental Evaluation in accordance with Annex 1, Article 3 of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, *Environmental Impact Assessment*.

The proposed action would consist of the development and implementation of surface traverse resources that could be used in conjunction with existing airlift capabilities to re-supply U.S. Antarctic Research Program facilities and provide a platform for scientific research or advanced surface-based survey activities in Antarctica.

EPA believes that this EIS provides an adequate discussion of the potential environmental impacts of this project in Antarctica. Therefore, EPA has no objection to the proposed actions as discussed in this final EIS.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this final EIS. The staff contact for this review is Aimee Hessert (202-564-0993).

Sincerely,

/s/
Anne Norton Miller
Director
Office of Federal Activities